

10

THINGS

NOT TO MISS

BY ETHAN GILSDORF
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

OCTOBER

1.

Head of the Charles Regatta

2.

Pumpkin fest

3.

Fall road races

4.

Corn mazes

5.

Winery tours

6.

Halloween roundup

7.

Horror film fest

8.

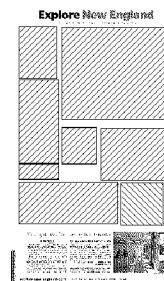
Martha's Vineyard Harvest Festival

9.

Foliage tours

10.

Edward Gorey House





MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

LOVE THAT DIRTY WATER Autumn isn't autumn without racing boats blanketing the Charles River. The Head of the Charles Regatta is the world's largest, attracting 1,600 boats and 8,000 college, high school, and club-level athletes. With seven bridges and two reverse S-turns, the 3-mile course is considered "the most challenging course to steer," says Fred Schoch, executive director. "[What makes] Boston the de facto Super Bowl of rowing is we have 250,000 people who come out and appreciate it," Schoch says. The action isn't all on the water. There's Row-a-Palooza, a two-day music fest with headliners Toots and the Maytals on Saturday and Tim Reynolds, a frequent Dave Matthews Band collaborator, on Sunday. The Rowing & Fitness Expo tent sells gear and accessories, and the Reunion Village tent (\$1 entry) is a place to unwind after a long walk, or row.

The 43d Head of the Charles Regatta, Charles River, Cambridge, 617-868-6200, hocr.org, Oct. 20-21.

SMASHING PUMPKIN (RECORDS)

2 In the battle of the pumpkins, Keene hopes to reign again. Last year, Boston broke the world record by amassing 30,128 jack-o-lanterns and lighting them all at once, beating the Keene Pumpkin Festival's 2003 record of 28,952. "We charge no admissions but we ask people who come to the fest to please bring a carved pumpkin," says Suzanne Woodward, director of the Keene event. "It's up to the people to bring the pumpkins to break the record."

While the New Hampshire town tries again, come for the fest's other events, like the children's costume parade, pumpkin pie eating contest, pumpkin seed spitting contest — and don't forget your carved masterpiece.

Keene Pumpkin Festival, Keene, N.H., 603-358-5344, pumpkinfestival.org. Oct. 20.



AL BRADEN/FILE

COOL RUNNING

3 The Boston Marathon may not be till April, but fall is a fine season for road races.

"You tend to run better in the cooler air," says Colin Peddie, owner of Boston-based Marathon Sports, among the nation's first running specialty stores. "The ideal temperature to run a race is between 40 and 50 degrees." Peddie's picks for October road races include the Bay State Marathon and The Sun Half Marathon in Lowell and the 5K/10K Canton Fall Classic. Up in Maine, the Mount Desert Island Marathon route is considered among the most gorgeous 26.2 miles in the country. Runners go from downtown Bar Harbor along the granite and pine-studded shoreline of Acadia to Southwest Harbor. "It's all about the scenery," says race director Gary Allen. Register now — a few spots are left.

Mount Desert Island Marathon, 207-276-4226, mdimarathon.org. Oct 14. Bay State Marathon and The Sun Half Marathon, Lowell, 978-263-5510, baystatemarathon.com. Oct. 14. Canton Fall Classic, Canton, 781-828-7284, cantonfallclassic.com. Oct. 28. Road race info at coolrunning.com.

10 THINGS, Page M10



DEDEK DAVIS/DOOTI AND DEESE MEDIA/PHOTO

A-MAZED AND CONFUSED

4 If disappearing into 8-foot-high cornstalk alleys sounds like fun, a corn maze is for you. New England's granddaddy cornfield maze is Mega Maze in Sterling, an eight-acre pattern that changes each year to foil repeat visitors. This year, Lost Vegas is the theme, with a rolling dice motif. At Maine's Pumpkin Valley Farm, two cows make up a 5-acre "Got milk?" plot that twists and turns maze-goers.

Coppal House Farm in Lee, N.H., sells 26 varieties of pumpkins and gourds, but its 6½-acre corn maze, depicting a Coyote Howling at the Moon, is the big draw. When owner John Dutton first bought his farm, he visited a corn maze and decided he wanted one, too. "We can do agritourism and still be farmers," he says. "The attraction is that it's a real farm."

Davis Mega Maze, 145 Redstone Hill, Sterling, 978-422-6666, davisfarmland.com/megamaze/index.htm, \$9.95 and \$12.95. Pumpkin Valley Farm, Union Falls Road, Dayton, Maine, 207-929-4088, pumpkinvalleyfarm.com, \$5 and \$8. Coppal House Corn Maze & Farm, 118 North River Road (Route 155), Lee, N.H., 603-659-3572, nhcornmaze.com, \$5 and \$8. (Haunted Overload attraction Oct. 27-28, 30-31, hauntedoverload.com.)

GRAPE EXPECTATIONS

5 Harvest is in the air at New England's wineries. In Maine, Cellardoor Vineyard offers daily tastings in a 1790s barn; its Harvest Fest features grape stomping, hot air balloon rides, and hay rides. For the itinerant, a seven-stop tour in Vermont takes you from one winery and cidery to the next.

"Now is the big season," says Frank Reinhold, owner of New Hampshire's largest vineyard, Flag Hill. Until Saturday, visitors can watch the grape harvest. "They can physically go through the vineyard and see the grapes being processed." And, of course, back at the farm, taste the results — wines, plus signature cranberry and maple liqueurs and vodka.

Cellardoor Vineyard, 367 Youngtown Road, Lincolnville, Maine, 207-763-4478, mainewine.com. Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Harvest Fest Oct. 13, 10-6.

Vermont wineries map at: vermontbrewers.com/tourmap.html.

Flag Hill, 297 North River Road, Lee, N.H., 603-659-2949, flaghill.com. Wednesday-Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.



ETHAN GILSDORF FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

GET SPOOKED

6 It's the season to get scared, and get in touch with our pagan pasts. In Vermont, a top attraction is The Haunted Forest in Williston, where guides lead victims along paths lighted by 1,000-plus jack-o'-lanterns. In New Hampshire, Thyme & Ewe Farm in Claremont hosts Haunted Hay Rides. No All Hallows' Eve would be complete without a walk in a cemetery. One magnificent burial ground is Cambridge's 175-acre, 175-year-old Mount Auburn Cemetery.

In Maine, horror fans can bring Stephen King's stories to life by visiting Bangor, stopping by Bett's Bookstore for a map (and King collectors items), and walking around sites from the novels "It" and "Pet Sematary."

At Connecticut's Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, a Day of the Macabre includes a walk through the Old Wethersfield Burial Ground and a museum lantern tour.

The Haunted Forest, Catamount Outdoor Family Center, 592 Governor Chittenden Road, Williston, Vt., 802-879-9160, thehauntedforest.org. Oct 18-27, \$8.50 and \$12.50. Thyme & Ewe Farm, Claremont, N.H., 603-542-1746. Haunted hay rides October weekends and Halloween night, \$5. Mount Auburn Cemetery, 508 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge, 617-547-7105, mountauburn.org. Bett's Bookstore, 584 Hammond St., Bangor, Maine, 207-947-7052, bettsbooks.com. Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, 211 Main St., Wethersfield, Conn., 860-529-0612, webb-deane-stevens.org. Event: Oct 28, \$10-\$15.

GORY DETAILS

7 To get your fright on, try the Rhode Island International Horror Film Festival. This year's edition screens over 40 independent fright films, from the French "Le Bagman" and the Brazilian vampire thriller "Akai," to the Canadian heart-stopper "The Demonology of Desire" and home-grown films like Rhode Island's "Pretty Dead Things."

Why Rhode Island? H.P. Lovecraft and Edgar Allan Poe spent time in Providence. "You're starting to see people from the periphery start to have interest in horror films," says producer Adam Short. "The festival has a huge national presence." Held at various theaters around Providence and Narragansett, the weekend is sponsored by horror magazines Fangoria and Rue Morgue, so you know this is the real gory deal.

Eighth Annual Rhode Island International Horror Film Festival, Providence and Narragansett, 401-861-4445, film-festival.org/Horror_ri.php. Oct. 18-21, \$10 per film, \$40 for six tickets.

ISLAND BITES

8 Billed as “a celebration of sea, farm and vine,” this food and wine festival aims to “show what we have to offer,” says Debbi Otto, director of the Martha’s Vineyard Annual Harvest Festival. Expert foodies from Boston’s East Coast Grill, Formaggio, and Rialto, among others, will discuss cheese, olive oils, and wines. Free boat rides take folks out to where local oysters are grown. “The oysters here are unbelievable,” says Otto. Most events you can walk to from town, including an ambulatory tasting called the Sumptuous Stroll.

The occasion also makes an excellent excuse to visit the Vineyard in what businesses call the “shoulder season,” i.e., empty beaches and quiet streets. Says Otto, “I think the fall is the whole reason for living on the Vineyard.”

Martha’s Vineyard Annual Harvest Festival, Edgartown, 508-939-0880, moharvest.org, Oct. 12-14. Advance tickets recommended.



ETHAN GILSDORF FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



NECEE REGIS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

ONE GOOD TURN

9 One Native American tale claims that leaves change from green to red once celestial hunters slay the Great Bear. But science has its own explanation: When dormancy begins, chlorophyll breaks down and the leaves' true pigments — vivid reds, yellows, and oranges — shine through. Leaves change at higher elevations and northerly areas first, working their way south as October progresses.

In New England, just about any back road will yield color. Popular routes are the Kancamagus Highway in the White Mountains, Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester, Vt., and Routes 2 and 8 in Western Mass. Foliage season does mean traffic and booked-up B&Bs. Plan ahead if you're staying the night, and try not to drive at 15 miles per hour as you gawk out the car window. Pull over, get out of the car, and hit the trails.

Foliage reports for New Hampshire: foliage.visitnh.gov; Vermont: vermontvacation.com/seasons/report.asp; and Maine: maine.gov/doc/foliage.



AN AWESOME OCTOBER

Row, run, sip, or stroll your way through autumn at explorenewengland.com.



PHOTOS BY TOM HERDE/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

DRAWN SCARED

10 “They enter laughing, they leave laughing,” says director-curator Rick Jones of visitors to the Edward Gorey House, the famed illustrator’s home-turned-museum packed with exhibits of art and personal history. On display are Gorey’s adolescent diaries and first editions of books — and also macabre gags like a pair of legs poking out from a carpet (a tribute to “G is for George smothered under a rug,” from “The Gashlycrumb Tinies”). Until Dec. 23, an exhibit celebrates the 50th anniversary of “The Doubtful Guest” (now being made into a Hollywood film).

“When people come in, we give them a view of who Edward was and his work,” says Jones. One museum docent is Gorey’s closest living relative; others, like Jones, are friends. “I think he would have been quite surprised that it’s been turned into a museum.” But, hopefully, tickled pink — or black and white.

The Edward Gorey House, 8 Strawberry Lane, Yarmouth Port, 508-362-3909, edwardgoreyhouse.org. \$2-\$5.

Ethan Gilsdorf, a freelance writer in Somerville, can be reached at ethan@ethangilsdorf.com.

